

Gambrell Francois
Public Hearing
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SPB 292

My name is Gambrell Francois and I'm 18 years old. When I was 8 my father and mother divorced. My mother was pregnant with my fourth sister and I was told she died during child birth. I then moved to Florida with my father, brother and sister. My father was an abusive man while I was growing up. I was beaten in handcuffs and my head and eyebrows were shaved off for public embarrassment. I began running away from home and getting in trouble with the law on purpose hoping just to get away. Later I became suicidal and ended up in the hospital after cutting my wrists. I was also raped while hitch hiking.

In 2008 I found my mom on a networking site called MySpace. We reunited have been homeless since. For a time in between living with my mother I lived with my uncle. He was homosexual who had a boyfriend who once made a fake MySpace page and sent me messages telling me to kill myself and that I would never be anything. After leaving my uncles I was transferred to a shelter in Connecticut along with my mother. Since then we have been in and out of homeless shelters. Many shelters wouldn't take me, my mother and my sister just because I was a 17 year old male. My mother and I had to split.

I was too mature to sleep in the same room with my mother and the rest of the females, so I was put in a room with a bunch of men who became homeless mostly after coming out of jail. I had to hide my stuff because people in the shelter would take it and sell it on the streets for drugs. Showers were the worst. The men wanted to find every way to make me feel uncomfortable. They would pull the curtain back and watch my every move.

Weeks later I found out that I was getting molested in my sleep by one of the men in the shelter. One night I pretended to be sleeping and hopped up to find a man sitting on the edge of my bed. I told the boss but they didn't believe me. My mother and I were kicked out of the shelter. I separated from her and went to stay with a friend.

And that didn't work out. I turned to my mother. I had just turned 18 years old. My mother started renting out rooms and did not have the extra money for me to stay with her so that's when I had to learn to survive on my own. I had no money, no warm place to sleep or any food. I was always talked into doing things I didn't want to do to have a warm place to sleep. I stayed with several people including a lady who was going through my mail and stealing money that my supporters were sending me to survive. I'm now living somewhere else and I have no money to help out. Neither do I have a job as it seems very hard for me to get hired. And I also go to school at "The academy school of arts" when I wake up every morning I wonder, will this be my last day here, will I get kicked out and asked to leave, will this be my last meal or will this just be my last day on earth. Just because my heart could no longer take the pressure.